- Focus on elementary education of satisfactory quality with emphasis on education for life.
- Bridge all gender and social category gaps at primary stage by 2007 and at elementary education level by 2010.
- Universal retention by 2010.

Special efforts are being made for improvement of access, enrolment, retention and achievement of girls in schools under this scheme.

1. National Literacy Mission (NLM) seeks to attain full literacy, *i.e.* sustainable threshold level of 75 per cent by 2005. It seeks to achieve this goal by imparting functional literacy to non-literate in 15—35 year age group. Major thrust of the programme is on promotion of literacy among women. In the literacy programmes, 60% of the learners are women and around 60% of volunteers also are women and young girls.

2. Mahila Samakhya Programme seeks to build up capacities, among groups of women and contribute towards the empowerment of women in rural areas, particularly from socially and economically marginalized groups.

Education for female through Gram Panchayats

690. DR. DASARI NARAYANA RAO: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that deep-rooted Socio.-cultural prejudices against education and pre-occupation with household chores are the main hurdles for the education of women and girls in the country; and

(b) if so, whether Government propose to involve Gram Panchayats and religious leaders in spreading education among women and girls?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DR. (SHRIMATI) RITA VERMA): (a) Many factors affect the education of women and girls in the country. These include socio-cultural and traditional practices

as well as the work girls have to do related to fuel, fodder, water, sibling care etc.

(b) Various schemes run by the Government of India like District primary Education Programme (DPEP), Mahila Samakhya, •Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), Education Guarantee Scheme and Alternative & Innovative Education and Adult Education Schemes under National Literacy Mission (NLM) provide for active Community participation in the form of Village Education Committees, Panchayati Raj Institutions, School Management Committees, Parent-Teacher Associations, Mother-Teacher Associations, Mahila Mandals and religious and community leaders, to elicit support for improving girls' education.

Literacy for Female and Child Workers

691. DR. DASARI NARAYANA RAO: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have formulated any action plan to spread literacy among the female and child labour in agriculture and industry in the country, so as to enable them to read and write atleast;

(a) if so, the details thereof and if not the reasons therefor; and

(b) the remedial measures being taken in this direction?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DR. (SHRIMATI) RITA VERMA): (a) The Government has adopted the following strategies to improve the female literacy in the country:

- National Literacy Mission.
- Mahila Samakhya Programme.
- Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan.

(b) and (c) National Literacy Mission seeks to achieve full literacy *i.e.* sustainable threshold level of 75% by 2005 by imparting functional literacy to non-literates in 15—35 age group. In order to achieve this objective, National Literacy Mission implements literacy programmes in three phases *viz.* Total Literacy